

am certainly disappointed that we have not provided full funding, and we have not addressed all of the issues to the complete satisfaction of parents, teachers, and schools, I am confident that this bill will help students with disabilities achieve to their highest potential.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I am pleased that Congress is in the final stage of reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA. While I am glad that the bill emerged in a bipartisan way, I am still frustrated that Congress has yet again failed to fulfill its promise to fully fund IDEA. With IDEA still drastically underfunded, schools are left without the necessary resources to provide the best services to children with disabilities, and our communities are burdened with an unfulfilled federal promise.

In my home State of New Jersey, school budgets are capped by law at 3 percent annual growth. Therefore, districts often have to cut other programs to accommodate mandated and rising special-education costs. Or—local property taxpayers, who already are overburdened—have to pay increased taxes to cover expenses that the Federal Government should be sharing.

I have received many letters, phone calls, and emails from concerned constituents urging Congress to fulfill the promise of full funding for the services mandated under IDEA. I have supported efforts to require full funding of IDEA and intend to continue the fight so that every child receives the free and appropriate public education the law guarantees and we can ease the burden on our local communities.

In addition, I would like to highlight one specific issue related to IDEA that has not only affected the children of New Jersey, but children across this nation. That is the staggering increase in the number of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, ASD. Recent epidemiology studies have shown that autism spectrum disorders are ten times more prevalent than they were just 10 years ago, making ASD the second most common developmental disability. While there is currently much debate and still no conclusive evidence as to the cause of this alarming trend, it is clear that this trend will continue. Equally clear is the critical need for Congress to address the issue of early intervention and effective treatment for children diagnosed with ASD.

Scientific evidence has proven that early intervention is a key to success when treating ASD. Over the last 20 years, experts have developed effective strategies for the correction of autism disorder, and research shows that with the early application of an effective therapy, substantial gains can be accomplished toward the remediation of autistic disorder in many children. With autism diagnoses escalating, expanding access to treatment, especially at an early age, is vital to improving

the outcomes for children affected by ASD. That is why I introduced the Teacher Education for Autistic Children Act or TEACH Act. I worked closely with New Jersey Center for Outreach and Community Services for the Autism Community, NJCOSAC, Autism Coalition for Research and Education, and Parents of Autistic Children to create this legislation that addresses the needs of autistic children by bringing more qualified teachers into the classroom, helping families receive the support and services they need for their children, and ensuring quality vocational programs to assist people with autism transition from school to work.

I am happy to report that some critical provisions of the TEACH Act have been included in the IDEA conference report currently being considered by the Senate. These provisions will make Federal funds available to develop and improve programs for children with autism, using research grounded in science. The grants will help ensure quality professional development for special education teachers by providing in-service training to schools and personnel who teach children with ASD. With the demand for services grossly outpacing the supply of qualified teachers and therapists, these provisions are critical to increasing the number of special education teachers trained to teach children diagnosed with ASD and help them reach their full potential.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the entire HELP Committee for their tireless efforts in working with me to get this essential language included in the bill. In particular, I would like to single out Connie Garner for her dedication and diligent work on behalf of children with special needs. I look forward to continuing to work on this important issue with my colleagues in Congress and with the autism community to ensure that all children with ASD have access to quality teachers trained in providing cutting-edge treatments.

The conference report was agreed to. Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I will note that is a significant piece of legislation that just passed. I serve on that committee. We spent several years working on it. We have improved some of the discipline problems. We have reduced some of the paperwork. I believe maybe there is more we can still do, but that is a big deal for hundreds of thousands of teachers and students all over our country.

#### MAKING CERTAIN CORRECTIONS TO THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 1350

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 524, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 524) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make certain corrections to the enrollment of H.R. 1350.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the concurrent resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 524) was agreed to.

#### EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE IN SUPPORT OF A REINVIGORATED UNITED STATES VISION OF FREEDOM, PEACE, AND DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 477, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 477) expressing the sense of the Senate in support of a reinvigorated United States vision of freedom, peace, and democracy in the Middle East.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the matter be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 477) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

#### S. RES. 477

Whereas the President articulated to the world on November 12, 2004, a vision of freedom, peace, and democracy for the broader Middle East;

Whereas this vision was also shared and expressed by Prime Minister Blair of the United Kingdom;

Whereas that vision includes a just and peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict based on 2 democratic States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security;

Whereas the President again stated his commitment to the security of Israel as a Jewish State;

Whereas the road map, endorsed by the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations, remains a realistic and widely recognized plan for making progress toward peace;

Whereas the international community should support Palestinian efforts to build the necessary political, economic, and security infrastructure essential to establishing a viable, democratic state;